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OUR PART IN THE COMMUNITY PATTERN

A radio discussion among Albert Hoefer, Assistant State Club Leader, Ithaca, New York, Peggy Wilson, 4-H Club member, Delaware County, New York, and Henry Redder, 4-H Club member, Dutchess County, New York, broadcast Saturday, August 7, 1937, in the 4-H Club program, National Farm and Home Hour, by 85 stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company.

---ooOoo---

HOEFER:

Hello Folks: Here we are in New York City and I want you to meet two of New York State's regular 4-H Club members who are here with me. This young lady is Peggy Wilson.

PEGGY:

How-do-you-do! Greetings from Downsville and the "Busy Little Women's 4-H Club."

HOEFER:

Where is Downsville, Peggy?

PEGGY:

Oh! - About 130 miles northwest of here. It's on the other side of the Catskill mountains, - in Delaware County.

HOEFER:

Is Peggy your real name or your nickname?

PEGGY:

It's my real name, Mr. Hoefer.

HOEFER:

So many times "Peggy" is a nickname, I thought perhaps your real name is something else. - - - - -

And folks - this young man is Henry Redder.

HENRY:

Hello everybody! Greetings from the Senior Live Wire 4-H Club of Upper Red Hook.

HOEFER:

Upper Red Hook? Is that some kind of a tool.....

HENRY:

No - its a village. Thats where our 4-H club meets.

HOEFER:

Do you live in Upper Red Hook?

HENRY:

No - I live at (or near) Tivoli. I want to bring greetings from there too, --- and the 27,000 other 4-H members in New York State.

(over)

PEGGY:

Say, just where are those places located on the map.

HENRY:

Upper Red Hook and Tivoli?

PEGGY:

Yes!

HENRY:

Right up the east bank of the Hudson River, -- directly north of here, -- about a hundred miles.

PEGGY:

Aren't you covering a lot of territory, Henry, when you bring greetings from all those places like you do, -- and then include all the other 4-H club members in the State.

HENRY:

Well, perhaps -- but I mean it! Well -----

HOEFER:

I can explain that. Henry's club has a reputation for being friendly. The members feel that their club is a definite part of the community life in Upper Red Hook so why shouldn't he feel that it's also a part of a state-wide 4-H organization?

PEGGY:

I'm not blaming him for feeling that way. My club feels that same way about Downsville -- and what's more -- we feel we're a part of the 4-H movement in the nation.

HOEFER:

Well, now -- if you both feel that way about your clubs, let's hear you try and prove it.

Henry, what's one of the things your club has done for the folks in the territory around Upper Red Hook?

HENRY:

For one thing, we've established a yearly scholarship of one hundred dollars to help a 4-H boy or girl in our community to attend college.

PEGGY:

You have? Say, I think that's great. Wasn't there a lot of work connected with that? How did you do it?

HENRY:

Well, there was, -- and still is! We've been interested in dramatics for quite a spell. We've been producing 4-H plays, as well as professional plays, to raise the money. We get a lot of fun and training out of doing it. It serves as good entertainment for the community, too.

HOEFER:

Henry, I'm interested in that scholarship idea. I think it's great, too!
"How did your club do it?"

HENRY:

I wondered if you were going to let me answer Peggy's question. I'll answer both of them together. Back in 1936, the idea came up in a Parent-Teachers Meeting

HOEFER:

Parent-Teachers meeting? Where do they come in?

HENRY:

Oh, - they were talking about a closer relationship between the adults and young people in the community. Well, we went to work on it and we have the hundred dollars raised for use this year.

HOEFER:

They turned the job over to your club?

HENRY:

Yes, we shared in it.

PEGGY:

Who is to get it this year, Henry?

HENRY:

A 4-H boy, David Fraleigh. Dave is the son of Mrs. Henrietta Fraleigh, our local 4-H club leader. He's ready for it, needs it and was selected to receive it this year. He will enter _____ College this fall.

HOEFER:

That will use the one hundred up. What do you plan to do for next year, raise another hundred?

HENRY:

That's the idea. We've already started on it. By next fall there'll be another hundred dollars waiting for the lucky 4-H boy or girl who needs it and can use it.

HOEFER:

Just who administers the scholarship, Henry? That is, who takes care of all the details in connection with it?

HENRY:

Bard College at Barrytown is taking care of that part for us.

HOEFER:

A while ago you said that your club shared in raising the scholarship. Who else helped? Did the Parent-Teachers help too?

HENRY:

Yes, - and the Junior Live Wire 4-H Club helped too.

PEGGY:

Junior Live Wire Club?

HENRY:

Yes, that's the club of younger people around Upper Red Hook.

HOEFER:

Who else helped?

HENRY:

The Red Hook Community people: parents of the club members: people connected with Bard College; - and Mrs. Fraleigh.

PEGGY:

Who's Mrs. Fraleigh?

HENRY:

She's our local 4-H Club Leader. She's leader for the Junior Club too!

HOEFER:

Now Peggy, - You've been asking a lot of questions.

PEGGY:

Have I?

HOEFER:

Let us have a chance at you. Seems to me I've heard about some community deeds the Busy Little Women's Club has been doing. What can you say for your club?

PEGGY:

In our county, Delaware, each 4-H club is supposed to sponsor at least one community project during the year.

HENRY:

Supposed to? How's that?

PEGGY:

Well, it's just part of our county 4-H plan. Why? Don't you think it's a good idea?

HENRY:

Sure do! Sure do!

PEGGY:

Our club is only four years old but we have already sponsored over a dozen community affairs. I get the biggest thrill out of the work we do at Christmas time.

HENRY:

What's that?

PEGGY:

Oh, - giving special attention to those less fortunate than ourselves. We're all just ordinary folks down there so we don't have too much money to spend.

HENRY:

How do you do it, then?

PEGGY:

We hit upon the idea of fixing up our out-grown clothes and toys for others we knew could use them. For two years we turned these over to the Home Bureau for distribution. For the last two years we did it ourselves.

HOEFER:

That is, you've been doing such things for four years?

PEGGY:

Yes, - and this whole thing began when we discovered two motherless children who go to our school. They have to walk about two miles through all kinds of weather to get to school. By watching this little boy and girl we girls decided what size clothing they would wear. We took some of our outgrown clothes and some of our brother's that were still in good condition and fixed them over for them.

HENRY:

Didn't you give them anything they really wanted, as well as what they needed?

PEGGY:

Yes, - we did that too! We asked questions so that they didn't catch on to what we were doing; and found out about some of the things they wanted.

HOEFER:

I suppose they wanted toys and games and other play things just like every normal boy and girl?

PEGGY:

That's right! And what a lot of such things there are - good things too - that we get tired of playing with and lay aside. We collected a lot of toys and games and made sure that among them were some of the things these children wanted.

HENRY:

Then what?

PEGGY:

Each girl wrapped her gift in tissue paper and colored twine, with plenty of Christmas stickers. Two girls decorated a large box and we packed all the gifts into it. These children live on a back road and did we have a time reaching their home!

HENRY:

Why was that? Snow and unplowed roads?

PEGGY:

Yes, - both - including snow drifts! For a good share of the way there wasn't even a track to follow, - just a faint sign of a road. Dad and Mrs. Beers, she's our local leader, and as many of the girls as could get in the car, went along. We finally reached their home late in the afternoon before Christmas

HENRY:

That sounds like some trip. I know what you're up against driving two miles in snow drifts over a road that has not been plowed or broken open by another car

PEGGY:

Well, we made it!

HOEFER:

Did they like it?

PEGGY:

Say, - the surprise and joy on the faces of those two children when they came to the door repaid us many times over for our efforts.

HOEFER:

We certainly can get a lot of fun out of giving, can't we, Peggy?

PEGGY:

Yes, - and just last year we discovered some children in Downsville who would have no Christmas. We began looking around and we finally had a list of 21 names of children whose families just couldn't provide a Christmas for them.

HOEFER:

So you did - what?

PEGGY:

We decided to give a party for them. We divided the names among the club members, and each girl supplies a gift for the person whose name she had.

HOEFER:

How did you run such a party?

PEGGY:

Well, to begin with the party was to be held at our leader's, Mrs. Beers, home, a mile out in the country. That meant either transportation for them or a rather long cold walk. We got our dads and older brothers to drive their cars so none of them had an excuse for not coming; then we had committees to provide the food and the entertainment.

HENRY:

This party was held last Christmas?

PEGGY:

Not on Christmas Day, - it was the day before Christmas and it was a huge success. Each one received a gift and, of course, we had a Christmas tree, too.

HENRY:

That sounds like happy days around Downsville for those who most need it.

Say, Mr. Hoefer, speaking of Christmas and Christmas trees, I've got a question.

HOEFER:

Shoot!

HENRY:

Isn't there quite a lot of roadside planting and forest tree planting done by 4-H Clubs?

HOEFER:

Do you mean in the forestry project or plantings as a club activity?

HENRY:

No, - not as an individual, - as a group project.

HOEFER:

Yes, Henry, the state over, there has been quite a little roadside and some forest tree plantations made. Some of those trees are being sold for Christmas trees to thin out the plantations to make room for the growth of the other trees. Why? Is your club doing some?

HENRY:

Yes.

HOEFER:

Well, - let's hear about it.

HENRY:

We've been at it for several years - six to be exact. At that time our 18 club members planted 15,000 red pine and Norway spruce trees and we've made re-plantings where needed for two years since then, where a few trees have died out.

PEGGY:

Where did you plant them, Henry?

HENRY:

Oh, - on land donated by three farmers, George Hubbard, and Clarence and Raeder Tinkle. Now we've got a nice young community forest, of about 15 acres well started and growing.

PEGGY:

Planting forest trees is a hard job where forestry club members have to do it alone, isn't it?

HENRY:

We don't do it alone in our section. We like to work together too.

PEGGY:

How do you do it?

HENRY:

When a club member plants his trees, all the other club members getting trees pitch in and help him out. We just gang up on those trees, organize our crews and do those trees go into the ground!

HOEFER:

That's like sharing farm labor at haying or threshing time, isn't it? I suppose when you're all through each club member has done as much work as though he planted his trees all by himself.

HENRY:

Just about, but it's a lot easier when a bunch works together, so it seems like less work for each one.

PEGGY:

We've done some planting too.

HOEFER:

What, girls planting trees?

PEGGY:

Sure, don't you think we are able to?

HOEFER:

If you say so, I guess you are. What about it Peggy?

PEGGY:

They're putting in a Farms to Market road through Wilson Hollow. It will be a short cut for traffic from southern to eastern New York State. Lilacs grow well in our section and we are planting them along this highway. We get the plants wherever we can find them.

HOEFER:

And where do you find them, Peggy?

PEGGY:

Oh, - around abandoned farm houses and old houses that have been torn down! And we're doing the planting ourselves too, - unless we strike something too hard for us to do.

HENRY:

Then you have to call on the man power, I suppose!

PEGGY:

Well, - why not! The more folks who share in it, the more interest we get and the more pride they'll take in it for having lent a hand.

HOEFER:

Right you are, Peggy! Don't you agree with that, Henry?

HENRY:

Sure do! We do the same thing around Upper Red Hook. But we don't ask for very much help from the girls when we do our planting.

PEGGY:

Perhaps you should. I'm just saying "perhaps". You know, some girls are not as "sissy" as you might think they are, Henry.

HENRY:

Now it's my turn to say "perhaps".

HOEFER:

Say, what are you two doing, having a little fun with each other?

HENRY AND PEGGY:

"Perhaps"

HOEFER:

There you go again. All right, - then I'll change the subject. Those plantings should look beautiful in the spring when lilacs are in bloom and they won't grow so tall to cut off the view of those rolling hills in your section of the state. What other things has your club done?

PEGGY:

Well, here's the list but you don't want to hear all about these.

HOEFER:

How many are there?

PEGGY

Here's just one - we had flower shows for a number of years. Everybody got interested in them and Downsville now has a garden club. Naturally, we're taking just a little credit for sowing some of the seed that brought this garden club into being.

HOEFER:

Well, - Why not take some credit, if you feel your club really helped!

HENRY:

You mentioned a party your club had, Peggy?

PEGGY:

Yes?

HENRY:

Our Club has parties, too!

PEGGY:

Just to entertain yourselves?

HENRY:

Well, we have that kind too. But this kind is different. You see, we don't have too many social events in Upper Red Hook. Most of them, for young people of our age, are held for those going to High School. Our club gives parties for young folks who are unable or who don't go to High School.

PEGGY:

Are there many like that where you live?

HENRY:

Not so many, but there are some - enough to have a nice party.

HOEFER:

Where do you hold these parties, Henry?

HENRY:

Usually in the Grange Hall. The Upper Red Hook Church and the local grange have helped us out with arrangements.

PEGGY:

What sort of parties are they? Dancing? Games?

HENRY:

Yes, - dancing, - games, - cards, - andrefreshments. That helps bring them.

PEGGY:

That sounds like a good idea for our club to try. After all, those not going to High School don't have too good a time socially, anyway. How many parties do you have during the year? Do you have them just in the winter time?

HENRY:

We had eleven last year. We began last fall and continued them during the winter. We expect to start again this fall and continue them through the coming winter.

HOEFER:

I like that idea, Henry. Have these parties interested any of these young folks in 4-H work?

HENRY:

Oh, - It's hard to tell but we do have some fellows in the club who are not attending High School. Some of them may have joined on that account.

HOEFER:

Do you charge the non-high school people anything to come to the parties?

HENRY:

No, - they're permitted to come free. We club members have to dig in to provide music and refreshments, though.

HOEFER:

It looks as though you young folks, with other members of your 4-H Clubs, are certainly taking over your share of community activities. It makes a difference, doesn't it, when older folks let you young folks go ahead and do things?

PEGGY and HENRY:

Yes, it does.

HENRY:

I know we wouldn't have been able to go ahead on our plan for the school playground equipment at Upper Hook if the older folks up there weren't willing.

PEGGY:

What did you do? Make the equipment?

HENRY:

No, - we raised the money for it. Most of it was bought outright. We did help a little in assembling it and setting it up.

HOEFER:

That was for use by all the children wasn't it, Henry?

HENRY:

Yes, - they use it all the time and it makes a good place for the younger ones to play. The Junior Club helped - and they helped in our library activity, too.

PEGGY:

Library activity, - Did your Upper Red Hook Club start a library too?

HENRY:

Not exactly, Peggy! We have added a good many books between the two clubs. This year, it became a branch of the library of Red Hook. We wanted those books used by all the people in Upper Red Hook so this fall we are going to see that more people use them.

HOEFER:

Just how are you going to do that, Henry?

HENRY:

Our plan may not do what we expect, but this fall our club members are going to deliver library books to the older people and others who are unable to go out and get them.

HOEFER:

Feeble people and those who are recovering, perhaps from illness?

HENRY:

Yes, - and those who are confined to their homes but who may still be able to read.

PEGGY:

That sounds like a real service too. Do you mind if I make a note of that idea for our club too, Henry?

HENRY:

No, - go right ahead - use all you can.

PEGGY:

Thanks!

HENRY:

We're always looking for new things to do, too. We didn't think up all of these ideas ourselves either. We're glad to share any of them with other clubs - and we'll use those developed by other clubs if they look good and we can use them.

HOEFER:

"Share what you have and its multiplied many times. Keep it to yourself and it dwindles and dies and....."

PEGGY:

What was that idea?

HENRY:

What did you say, Mr. Hoefer?

HOEFER:

Oh, - just a passing thought, - about sharing what you have -

PEGGY:

And when you don't share, it isn't multiplied?

HOEFER:

Yes, - that's the thought. It came to me just a few moments ago when Henry said his club was willing to share their ideas with other clubs. I'm thinking too of the part the local leader plays in getting new ideas for the club, - and the other things leaders share.

PEGGY:

I know Mrs. Beers passes on a lot of ideas to our club.

HENRY:

And Mrs. Fraleigh does the same for us.

HOEFER:

Well, we don't want to, and can't forget the part that local leaders play in the 4-H club program. Leaders like Mrs. Beers of your club, Peggy, and Mrs. Fraleigh, Henry. We can multiply here too - the things these two people are doing for your clubs can be multiplied by two thousand in New York state alone.

PEGGY:

Is that the number of clubs in New York State, Mr. Hoefer?

HOEFER:

Yes, - just about - and every year there are more and more young folks who have passed beyond the upper age limit of 21 years for club work who are becoming leaders of clubs. Would you two club members say that your 4-H clubs have provided a good means for doing the things you have told me about today?

HENRY and PEGGY:

Sure!

HENRY:

What other organization for rural young folks is there that would give us the chance to learn the things we learn about agriculture.....

PEGGY:

And homemaking.....

HENRY:

And club organization and permit us to exist as a community group. -

PEGGY:

And take part in community affairs like we do just like the grown folks?

HOEFER:

I can't say! But I'm glad you feel that way about it. After all, 4-H Clubs are for all rural young folks from 10 to 20 years old. Just think what a much more tremendous force for good 4-H clubs could be if there was a 4-H club like yours in every rural community!

PEGGY and HENRY:

That would be something!

HOEFER:

And that's just what we're working toward here in New York State - and I'm sure that's the way state 4-H leaders in other states feel too. Oh, - Must you go?

PEGGY:

Yes, We've got to go along.

HOEFER:

Well, this has been a most enjoyable visit. Come in again when you're down this way - and keep that good community work going.

PEGGY and HENRY:

We'll do our share - Good-bye.

HOEFER:

Good-bye.

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